1872

78

FUNERAL ADDRESS.

The following Address was read by Mr. Robert Green, at the funeral of his wife, which took place at Gult

On Wednesday, 23rd October, 1872.

My Friends, we have met to-day to pay the last tribute of respect, friendship and affection to our departed Friend. Although she was my partner in life, I cannot allow this occasion to pass without making a few remarks on her life and death.

We have also met to consider briefly the subject of Death and the lesson it teaches to the living; and if while we pass a few moments in these reflections, we should be so fortunate as to obtain therefrom any incentives to the better discharge of the duties we owe to ourselves, to one another and to the cause of reason and humanity everywhere, it may not be in vain that we have met together to-day.

The event of death, though unavoidable, produces very generally and naturally feelings of solemnity and sadness when it comes either to ourselves or our immediate friends.

This is to be expected and it is commendable. Our friends, too, we consider part of us, and hence we are seldom if ever prepared to yield them up, even when they have lived the allotted term prescribed to human existence and beyond which if they remain there can be but little else in store for them than the pains and infirmities of old age. Still we would keep them with us if we could. We would always like to look upon the old familiar faces that have smiled upon us from our childhood, and would always like to hear the accents of those kind voices that have smoothed and cheered us on the rugged way of life. We never become tired of looking on the one nor of hearing the other. These feelings are natural and honorable, for they spring from the kindliest emotions of our common humanity. We are social beings, and it is in the society of each other that our happiness consists. But it is in the family circle more especially that our choicest treasures are garnered, and when a member is taken away an aching void is left within the heart that years on years may not fill up, for memory is always busy in picturing the lineaments of the loved and lost.

We are reminded, my Friends, upon this occasion of her whose career in life has just ended. Although for years she enjoyed but very inferior health; still she wished to live, being surrounded as she was by a kind circle of friends and acquaintances and enjoying all the comforts that a happy home could afford. Believing that this world was the ~~right~~ ~~be~~ ~~let it stay~~ all and the end all, it was natural for her to have a strong tenacity for life.

> "Do you ask what religion she had?
> Be her character thus understood—
> A dissenter from all that was bad,
> A consenter to all that was good."

My friends, seldom or never has the coffin closed over a more upright woman. Death had no terrors for her. Although she wished to live, she looked upon Death as a blessing and not as a curse. When disease had made such

headway in her system, when she saw that it was impossible for her to recover, then she welcomed death as a friend. In justice to the departed, I must say, that the principal features in her character were Honesty, Industry and Kindness. A wrong or an unjust action she scorned but upheld right and truth under all circumstances. When enjoying anything like fair health she was ever busy adding to the comforts of our happy home. Her hand was ever open to alleviate the wants of the poor and needy.

On the morning of her death, I was pleased to hear her guardian make this remark, "She has gone; a wrong word she never gave to me."

We pity her who has lost a loving child but she has this consolation that she did her duty nobly. No Mother could do more for a loved one, than she did for the departed.

For myself, I will only say, I have lost my nearest and dearest friend, we cannot hold ourselves out the consolation that we will meet her again, for we believe that she has gone to sleep the sleep that knows no wakening. If their is such a thing as a meeting—and I hope their may be—we shall resume those kindly associations we formed when here. But we see nothing in nature to warrant us in harboring the idea, for as the Writer says "as the tree falls so it must lie," "Man goeth down to the grave and riseth again no more for ever."

The lesson to be learned from the event of death is to employ our time usefully in the performance of good deeds rather than in making a display of profession. It is customary I am aware on occasions of this nature to listen to exercises of another character. We cannot all think alike; but their should always be charity for honest convictions, and if this were the case, we should hear no more persecution and intolerance on account of opinions. We believe that good works are the only preparation for this life or any other, and that he whose career has been useful and blameless, is the fittest to live and the best prepared to die.

May we all live thus. Be kind to the poor and unfortunate; relieve the oppressed; instruct the ignorant; be forgiving to the erring; and just to all. So that when our turn comes to follow our dear sister and take our last look on earth, it may be said of us that we have done our duty and made the world a little better for our having lived in it.

And now, my dearest friend, my kind associate, farewell. This is a hard word to use in ordinary circumstances, but on an occasion such as this it makes the eyes and the tongue to falter. In all our meetings for the cause of truth, and the advancement of the human family we will only wish that you were with us. In all our friendly gatherings you will not be forgotten, but will live in the beating hearts of those who knew you best.

Dearest, again, farewell.